THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) A Tripartite Committee was constituted, in pursuance of the assurance to the AAI's Employees Joint Forum, to look into (i) Employee-related issues including their job security, and (ii) Issues and proposals of modernizing airports by Airports Authority of India (AAI).

(c) and (d) The Tripartite Committee held 5 meetings so far. Discussions are still in progress.

Diesel/Petrol seized by Customs/DRI

*232. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that custom officials seized a tanker on 24th May, 2006 in Mumbai trying to smuggle over a huge quantity of highly inflammable material into the country;

(b) the total quantity of diesel and petrol seized in the financial year 2005-06 by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in India;

(c) whether it is a fact that large quantity of the imported fuel like kerosene is used to adulterate petrol and diesel in India;

(d) if so, what is the total quantity of kerosene seized in year 2005-06 by the Ministry; and

(e) what preventive actions Government have taken to stop the adulteration of kerosene?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. One supply Vessel "Sea Bulk Toota" and one barge "M.L. Anchor" were seized by Customs Officers on 23/24-5-06 while the Vessel was transferring diesel to the barge. The total quantity of diesel seized in this operation was 175 MTs i.e. 2,20,000 Itrs. with GIF value of Rs. 46.20 lakhs (approx.) and market value of Rs. 78.00 lakhs (approx.).

(b) The total quantity of diesel and petrol seized during 2005-06 by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence is 8.950 MTs.

(c) and (d) On account of the price difference between petrol/diesel and various adulterants available in the market as well as the easy miscibility of these products with petrol/diesel, the possibility of adulteration of petrol/diesel cannot be ruled out. Generally, diesel is adulterated with kerosene. During 2005-06, the Customs Department has not effected any seizure of kerosene for reason of its being used/ intended to be used as an adulterant.

(e) In order to eventually eliminate the diversion of PDS kerosene for adulteration, the Government has taken the following steps:—

(i) The Government has approved a pilot project for radically revamping the PDS kerosene network. One of the salient features of the scheme is that supplies to the sub-wholesale points will be made under the direct supervision and responsibility of the Oil Marketing Companies [OMC]s.

(ii) In order to monitor the movement of Tank Trucks transporting PDS Kerosene, the Government has advised the OMCs to install Global Positioning Systems that enable tracking of the vehicles on real time basis.

(iii) The import of Kerosene has been canalized since 25.11.2003 through State Trading Enterprises such as Indian Oil Company, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. etc. for all purposes and also through the State Trading Corporation by Advance License Holders. Since November 2003, there has been no import of kerosene by private agencies who were earlier allowed to import and market kerosene under the Parallel Marketing System.

Marking of Kerosene

*233. SHRI EKNATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry, in a serious bid to curb a large scale adulteration of petroleum products, would implement marking of kerosene in the first phase, across the country from October 1st;